

EXHIBIT 49

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3/6/06 Indo-Asian News Services 00:00:00

Indo-Asian News Service
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March 6, 2006

Bush to nation: India-US n-deal good

Indo-Asian News Service

Washington, March 6 -- US President George W. Bush has lost little time on his return to start lobbying for his civilian nuclear cooperation deal with India.

In his regular Saturday radio address, he asserted he had reached a historic agreement with India that would help both the countries and that he expected New Delhi to open wider the doors to trade with the US.

"Like America, India has endured terrorist attacks on its own soil. Like America, India is a democracy that understands the best way to ensure peace is to advance freedom," asserted the president, noting India's efforts to build democratic institutions in Afghanistan too.

The "historic" civilian nuclear agreement will bring not only India's programme under international safeguards and inspection but its civilian nuclear programme "into the international non-proliferation mainstream", he contended.

Bush was in India March 1-3 during which he and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh reached the civilian nuclear cooperation deal.

He faces an uphill battle upon his return, with some severe opposition from nuclear non-proliferation diehards like Rep. Ed Markey (Democrat from Massachusetts) who heads the bipartisan non-proliferation caucus in Congress and also from those that designed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and are probably in disagreement with New Delhi's list separating civilian and military nuclear facilities.

"The agreement also is good for the American economy," insisted the president.

"The agreement will help meet India's surging energy needs, and that will lessen India's growing demand for other energy supplies and help restrain energy prices for American consumers," a point he has persistently hammered on even before he left on the India trip.

"In my meetings with Prime Minister Singh, I made clear that trade between our countries must be free and fair. I know that America's workers can compete with anyone, any time, anywhere so long as the rules are fair," said the president trying to assuage fears of outsourcing and job losses that groups within the labour movement have criticised.

He reiterated his points about the growing Indian middle class and its desire for American products, calling it one of the fastest-growing export markets.

"Middle class Indians are buying home appliances from American companies like Whirlpool. Younger Indians are enjoying McCurry meals from McDonald's. And Air India has recently ordered 68 planes from Boeing," announced the president dwelling on companies that are household names in this country.

Last year, exports to India grew by more than 30 percent.

"And all this trade is creating jobs and opportunity in America. So we will continue to work to level the playing field for our workers, farmers, and businesses - and deliver a better life for all Americans," he asserted.

In his radio address, he also spoke about the March 4 Pakistan leg of his journey.

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HTS ak 060306-227618

---- Index References ----

Company: AIR INDIA LTD; MCDONALDS CORP; BOEING CO (THE)

News Subject: (Government (1GO80))

Region: (India (1IN24); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); Southern Asia (1SO52); Indian Subcontinent (1IN32); North America (1NO39); Asia (1AS61))

Language: EN

Other Indexing: (AIR INDIA; BOEING; CONGRESS; HT; HTS; INDIA; INDO ASIAN NEWS; MCDONALDS; NPT; PROLIFERATION TREATY) (Bush; Ed Markey; George W. Bush; Manmohan Singh; Middle; Singh; Younger Indians)

Word Count: 606

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